



A SOUVENIR

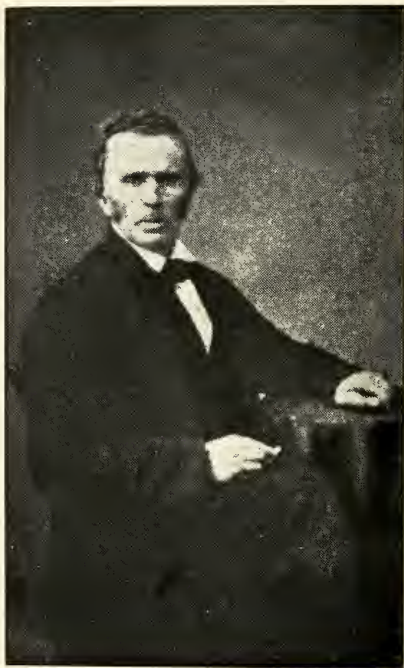


INCIDENTS, EXPERIENCES AND REFLECTIONS

BY

MARTHA A. JOHN.

“He hath showed thee, O, Man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Micah. chap. vi, verse viii.



Elida John.

FATHER.

Exalted lives have oft been lived,
And beloved (in diverging circles
known)
For godly works in which their lives
had grown
But this dear one was all our own.
In our world

Ours, a wise and true protector,
Looked up to around the family hearth,
A counselor of inestimable worth—
A strength to any home on Earth—
A good father!

He chose the Christian's earnest
ways:
And his example plead unerringly,
"Let others go the way which they
may see
But as for my house, and for me,
We'll serve the Lord."



Sarah H. John.

MOTHER.

With contented trust—unusual sweetness—

 Kindest deeds along her path
Our precious mother has lain down
 Her time-worn staff!
Now all care with us, and grief severest
 We must meet alone!

Rest for the weary, mother dearest,
 Where pain's unknown.

In reflection, like a panorama
 (We gaze through blind'ning tears)
Comes this record now unfolding,
 Of ninety years!

Much in life that seemeth dreariest
 Recurrereth o'er and o'er
But thy peace and joy, mother dearest
 Are forever more!

Ah we miss and need thy tender touches
 On our silvering hair,
And in the plans of daily life, we miss
 Thee everywhere!

True and thoughtful friends, the very
 nearest

 We cherish tenderly,
Yet mother, oh our mother dearest
 None can be like thee!

Spring.

Let pens catch now the melody
 Of treasured words we'd sing,
 Since out upon the changing sea
 Of time, behold the Spring:
 What buds keep coming in her train
 To burst in pink and green:
 She brings such robes for hill and plain
 Unknown in Winter's sheen:
 There's rose and gold and purple bright
 Quivering o'er the sky—
 A softer touch to every light
 That's streaming from on high:
 The bluejays in their winter nests
 Have heard the distant call—
 Preparing now to meet the guests
 Of gladness, one and all.
 The loved and longed for angel Spring
 Is moving hitherward!
 Then in the glad some welcoming
 Let there go thitherward
 Like incense from the altar rising—
 Like sweetness from the bud
 Deeds of goodness, kind surprising
 And praises unto God!

Jane Grey Swisshelm.

Jane Grey Swisshelm was born in 1815 in Pennsylvania. She was one of the earliest and a most ardent abolitionist. The first abolition meeting ever held in Alleghany county, Pa. was held under the famous sycamore tree on her place. Charles Sumner attended that meeting. She was a journalist of ability, and a leader in the passage of the Homestead law in the western states. She died in 1884 at her old home, Swissvale, in Alleghany county, Pennsylvania.

An unconquerable christian spirit
 With tenderness that birthright gave
 Was born when Nature crowned with
 vital life
 This champion for the slave,
 This philanthropist and able leader
 Where far too few with courage
 stand!
 But now her powerful pen has fallen
 From an untiring hand!
 A rambler strayed through tang'ed
 seclusions
 Searching for themes and relics rare
 About her far-famed Swissvale home.
 He found
 Ruins and strangers there!

He found the relics—the "sunlighted
 den",

Even the sylvan seat, he found
 Fronting meadows and amphitheaters
 Of distant hills beyond.

But all the beautiful born in Swissvale
 Died soul and life with its queen!

And what though the urchins of a
 truckman

Deface and mar the scene—
 What though her shrubbery and
 trailing vines

Are dying out, here and there,
 And wornout buildings are tumbling
 down,

She'll ne'er awake to care!

Her work, her holy mission is finished
 Which helped so much to clear the
 way

That a race in bondage might step
 forward

That they might all be free!

It is meet that this Scriptural injunction

Is carved upon her granite slab—

"Speak unto the children of Israel

(So beautifully sad)

Speak unto the children of Israel

That they may go forward" it reads!

O, that all may go forward and upward
 Her great example pleads.

Summer.

Resting here in blissfulness

Amidst the June-time showers

Inhaling honied fragrance

Flung from opening flowers—

From blossoms in the grain fields,

And spicy bloom from trees,

We linger as worshipers

Enwrapped in mysteries.

We breathe the sweet elixir

Of Summer's blessed reign,

And through a slumberous sweetness,

And gladness—almost pain

We inhale the delicate

And unutterable love—

The exhilarating freshness

Sent from field and grove.

Opening corols tremble

In a shower bath like dew:

We pluck them in their beauty,

Peerless white and peerless blue,

Each adding to a latent charm

Breaking into new delight.

Flooding every thinking mind

With a hotter light.
 Human minds have failed to measure
 In its fullness, THIS!
 A harmony of anthems,
 An essence draught of bliss,
 Somewhat unknown in language
 And all untouched by hand
 Yet the soul—the silent spirit
 Can understand!

Summer Evening Thoughts.

Listening to the warbling birds
 And pleasant sigh of breeze
 Ascribing praises, (not in words)
 Come hither thoughts like these
 As blessings for this evening hour—
 And Rest, O, in welcome power.

The sultry day with leisure ride,
 And picnic in the grove
 Has passed, with all its loads beside—
 Its idlings and its love—
 Its hopes, its rests, and dreams of the
 young,
 Sweet as carols in vespers sung!

All's over now! And in the charm
 That twilight hours enfold,
 Encircling the quiet farm
 In eve's magnetic hold,
 (A deepening shade and bird's farewell)
 All touch the pen with restless spell.

A mellow pacing in the lanes,
 Of homeward marching kine
 Prefigures of the life that reigns
 Where thrift and peace entwine;
 And whistling at his evening chores
 The boy shuts up the great barn doors.
 The milk is strained in ample cans—
 In cool sweet cellars set,
 And all the work for weary hands
 Let us at last forget,
 And rise to where the spirit sees
 A way through unsealed mysteries!

From sunlines, in golden tints and red
 Touching zenith far
 Come whispers (though a word's not
 said)
 Of majesty and power!
 And leaflets on the drooping limbs
 Seem hushed in service— stirred in
 hymns!

The birds have ceased their warbles
 now,
 The sky is set with stars,

And slumber stealing o'er each brow
 Like night on silent hours:
 And night and sleep a welcome guest,
 Call the mind and pen to rest.

Echoes From Kansas

The following lines are founded upon an incident which occurred during the excitement at the time when the new star for Kansas was proposed to be placed upon the "Star Spangled Banner." The people of the south resolved that the new state should come into the Union as a slave state, while the people of the north decreed that it should be pledged to Freedom.

Across the flower-decked prairies
 Of wild though verdant lands
 Along the Osage and Neosho
 And Kansas river sands—
 Crept the blossom-scented breezes—
 Came down the sunlight beams
 Illuming a land of promise
 In bold explorers dreams!
 We were roaming then (mere children)
 Round homes afar away
 Unknowing there should rise *right there*
 A fratricidal fray
 That would unrivet bands that bound
 A weak oppressed race,
 And wash from off our country's flag
 Its national disgrace!

Step after step, and year by year
 Our country's pulse beat fast
 Till scarce a hillside home, but heard
 The echoes as they passed.
 Then came one morn in autumn
 In an Ohio town
 When a *train* upon its eastern run
 Had turned its breakers down.
 The steaming, seething engine seemed
 Impatient to move on;
 Coaches were filled with passengers—
 The busy day begun.
 Great political excitements
 Were stirring anxious souls—
 Men discussed the situations
 Disturbing Freedom's polls--
 Those efforts through fraud and riot
 To plant on Kansas plains
 A "peculiar institution"
 To curse where'er it reigns!
 Voters were weighing seriously
 These themes of life or death;
 Women too were listening gravely
 Almost with bated breath
 When the engine's whistle sounded

Its searching, belching blast,
And hasting brakemen slammed the
doors

As in and out they passed.
Two active porters climbed the steps.

Bearing most tenderly
A feeble mother, weak with years —
Long life's infirmity!

They bore her to a rear-car.
Each seeming want supplied:

A boy observing every movement
Kept closely by her side.

Watching with keen solicitude
In filial noble ways—

Told their pathetic history
Unminding blame or praise.

This was his father's loving mother—
Mother with palsied hand

Lately come from the Scottish hills—
Their ancestral land —

Came to dwell among her children,
And die among her own,

Passing for this holy purpose
Through all but death alone!

With joyous tears, they welcome her
Into their loving arms—

Protecting love should fondly guard
From all external harms.

Her queer fancies were respected —
Her wishes great and small:

The *dear* mother should be honored
And gratified in all.

They gave her an easy carriage
With velvet cushions lined.

And two negro maiden servants
Obedient and kind

Yet she drooped in painful sadness
And soon there crossed her mind

A sort of craze unaccountable—
Strange and undefined!

She chose at last the coarsest food
Her sustenance, day by day.

And refused the aid of servants
Almost in every way.

Vainly her children plead with her—
Entreaty all in vain—

And that weary voyage, she plead
To travel back again!

"And she must *gang* back to Scotland
(The little hero said)

My father would *na gang wi* her
So I have come instead."

That which just *had* held the people
With a thrill of interest

In far off Kansas, found diversion
Here—the gravest, tenderest!

Helpless age appealing mutely
Unto the hearts of those

Who were watching slow developments
So suddenly disclosed.

The scene was sad and puzzling
And hard for men to read;

"Was there my boy, some *nidden* cause
Of selfishness or greed—

Some trifling, or hapless secret—
Some individual lack

To drive grandma from her kindred
This tedious journey back?"

"None (the earnest grandson answered
In calm straightforward tones)

Only she could *na* breathe for Slavery
She said." (Its sighs and wrongs!)

"She said she could *na* die in peace
For *bluid* on father's soul."

Eyes were opened, the truth unveil-d
And O, so beautiful.

They seemingly had gazed upon
A poor demented brow:

But suddenly as if translated,
A very angel now!

Instead of palsied lunacy
In tenement of clay

Behold a grand heroic mind
Unclouded as the day.

She could not breathe for Slavery
Where idle comfort lolls,

Nor bear that deep corroding sin
Upon her children's souls!

She would not lend one finger's aid
Her fellow man to blight;

All the children of Our Father—God
Were precious in her sight!

She'd be buried in the kirkyard
Among unsullied graves,

But not in a land that licenses
A bartering in slaves!!

Over thy fair prairies, Kansas
Let soft vespers sweep:

No human chattel is there enchained—
No *slave* is there to weep!

O, sweet homes in Kansas - historic
land

Rising prosperously in view.
May never a wrong that stains a state

Poison the air that kisses you!

Around the Evening Lamp

A farmer's home called our Union
there.

To sew for abandoned babes in a Mis-
sion's care—

To work for helpless waifs in deed and
thought:

Deep interest was to this banquet-
brough

Matrons with little ones amidst us trod
And in sympathy, their own seemed *near*
to God!

We knew of babes clothed in rags--
sadly knew,

And garments now from busy fingers
flew;

All striving--most substantially to
bless--

To fling a mite, on the sea of Help-
fulness!

One mother called to mind, the Winter
time,

The dreariest, despite displays sub-
lime,

And never welcome as Summer, or the
Spring,

Nor as Autumn, with her leaves in
coloring.

Could there be a difference, in
thoughts like these?

Yet one, who, (with a child upon her
knees)

Paused a moment, then said "I love
Winter."--See

That meant better than times for
bird or bee!

Mentally we saw pictures of her home
In winter evenings, where there may
not come

Disturbances; lamps alight: blinds
drawn down,

All confidence true--*lose* the bright-
est crown!

We seemed to feel in waves, 'invisible,
a truth

In sympathy with her, and fleeting
youth--

Sweet congenial thoughts, and restful
moods

Dear perhaps as wand'ring in a
summer woods!

Yes, tonight, *I* love the Winter too
from burden freed:

Then let's light our evening lamps,
and settle down to read.

Wild Violets.

Watching for violets. We love them--
Their wonderful hues--

Their freshness, sweetness and beauty
In purple and blues:

We find them in hedges' seclusions
Garnering their own

Extract from sunbeams, whose intru-
sions

Glint the osage throne.

It is the freshest blossom of the morn,
Though richer "cloth of gold"

In colors wondrously inborn

Doth pansy's petals hold.

But Violet! Violet! in thy meekness

Evolve thy lessons grand

Since thy existence and thy sweetness

Touch the Builder's Hand!

To us returns the old enchantment.

Now through memory traced,

When first an idle wand'ring footprint
Tracked the unplowed waste--

When first *we* marked the stirring
wonders

Beyond description's pen--

The beauty of this newland's splendors
In Nature's untouched reign.

We saw the graceful deer--unwary

In their pastures green

Galloping over widths of prairie

As king in right, or queen,

Until the plowmen came; beholding

Their new wrought charms--

The wild blown meadows, slowly mold-
ing

Into fruitful farms.

So now like mystic spell uprisen,

Seem these violets drest

With power, calling back a vision

From the long-gone past!

We pluck as then our choice selections

From widely scattered flowers;

Tenderly flow the recollections

Of those precious hours--

Too sweet for oblivion--for consignment

Where coarser moments sleep!

An opening blossom breathes refine-
ment--

A bursting bud can speak--

Or touch the heart with abounding
thoughts

Not selfishly our own!

O, we're thankful for the violets--

For all the joy they've shown.

Pastoral

My friends and I, on a quiet morning--

Following the vernal season's dawn-
ing,

Drove out to greet Spring's angels
flinging

Violas round, and setting birds to
singing--

Calling softly up from the southland
fair

The gentlest, freshest breath of air.

These were hours of leisure sweet,
 and we
 Came out to prize what'er there was
 to see,
 Even the herdman's flock, fat and sleek
 Browsing in peace along the winding
 creek
 Where the sward is green, seems
 velvety green
 In its first new crop to tinge the scene.
 And as we drank these living visions
 in,
 We called to mind once more a far
 off scene—
 The semblance of a thoughtful shepherd
 lad,
 In the famous coat of many colors
 clad,
 And wandering alone in Shekhem's
 field
 In pastures worn—perhaps untilled.
 He strode trustfully on to an uncon-
 scious fate—
 This great young dreamer, from a
 low estate
 While a preparing Hand in holy grace
 Led him step by step to his honored
 place,
 Impressing us that through *worth* alone
 Are the chosen of Jehovah known.
 Sing birds among these Whiteside
 county farms:
 These meadow lands are dressed in
 vernal charms,
 The willows' and maples' twigs are all
 alive
 With sweet suggestions for our
 splendid drive:
 Sing birds, bloom plants; we see and
 hear and feel
 A share of what these all reveal.

A Drive to Town

Leisurely we drove away
 Through the autumn scenes of a rest-
 ful day
 Taking the child from his happy play
 To a town by the river.
 Slowly jogged our beast along—
 (*Slow to be sure, but physically strong*)
 Through lanes where the wild bird
 learned its song
 Of praise unto the Giver!
 Between hedgerows, green with
 leaves

Our road-way lay, and amongst the
 trees
 Where the turtle dove in sadness
 grieves
 Anear her guarded nest.

We passed vervains dressed in blue
 And purple asters starring miles of
 view—
 Blossoms which my little comrade
 knew—
A roadside gaily drest!

All so fresh and newly made,
 So perfect in every tint arrayed:
 "Who sowed them (the darling baby
 said)

This one, and this and that?"

Who sowed them? my own thoughts
 rise,
 Except the Hand that planned the
 arching skies
 And built the world with our destinies
 Beyond our divining—

That gave unto clay, a soul
 To read and interpret the beautiful,
 And keep unmarred, as priceless jewel
 The casket ever shining.

We entered the market town
 Where the road-way flowers are trod-
 den down
 That sometimes uplift a puny crown—
 A weak—a brief expansion!

We noticed hurrying feet
 Crowding along the busy market street
 To bustling shops, stores, or home re-
 treat,
 Be it cot or mansion.

All these varied scenes among,
 The boy keeps saying as we drive along
 "Tell me auntie, where these boys be-
 long
 And whither are they going?"

My own thoughts keep asking too,
 Do they all belong to the just and true
 In the varied lines which they pursue—
 Their deeds—their sowing?

Here are crowded marts, with men
 Handling O, thousands of bushels of
 grain
 Gathered from the country—hill and
 plain
 In careful keeping;

Merchants with useful wares
 All seemingly absorbed in business
 cares

To which farm and town alike are heirs
In continual meeting—

Meeting on one common plain
To which the high and low must all
attain,

The human need of fruit and grain
That every farm's displaying.

O, back again from city noise—
Back to the quiet home my heart
enjoys:

The baby picks up his laid down toys
And he resumes his playing.
1882.

A Trilobite

An honest visitor
Earnestly aroused—awakened, sat
In a Relic Gatherer's cabinet;
And he carefully took
And held a seeming pebble to the
light:

"O that is nothing but a trilobite
Struck from a common rock

(Said the Relic Gatherer)
But here is a jewel of ancient art,
Whose strange history let me im-
part—

A worthy theme for thought!
See, it is a ring of solid gold,
Designed in figures curious, old,
And mark, how finely wrought!

It is no modern jewel—
'Twas stripped from the finger of one,
who

For seventeen long centuries through
In buried palace sat
At rest, in costly embellished room
That proved, alas! the pitiful tomb
Of the desolate!

It was brought from Pompeii!
Examine it well: pause and think:
What terror for those upon the brink
Of that awful hour,
When helpless, trembling, pale with
fear
They beheld the molten lava near
In ruthless power!

Like feathers in the blast
Were poor man's frail efforts feebly
plied;

Terrific quakes of the Earth replied,
The molten stream rolled in!
The wondrous city was buried deep
In undisturbed—in dreamless sleep—
Its wisdom and its sin!

Seventeen hundred years!
The curious eyes of this late day
Now pry into the *passed away*,
Unveiling—bringing forth.
Thoughtfully we gaze on solemn forms
Whose ears have long unheard the
storms

That rock and stir the earth!

Weariest thou of this?
Then come hither into this hall,
View stranger relic, surpassing all
We have yet displayed;
Prepare for wonder! let nerves be
calmed;

A *human mummy*; preserved—embalm-
ed

In Egypt's catacomb laid!

Unfold these wrappings; lo
These feet perhaps trod hillsides green
While yet the holy Nazarene
In vocal accents taught:
While Jerusalem was yet in youth
Afraid to hear the living truth
That dieth not!"

The trembling answer came
"But give, give me, pray another sight
Of that seeming stone—that *trilobite*
Let us gaze on it;
Dear friend, deem me not of careless
mind,
Nor believe alas, that I am blind
In wonder's cabinet!

But that remoter era!!
Bring me relics from the first creation
Wrung out from earth's deep founda-
tion
Ere was formed a plan
Of the beautiful, fit dwelling place
Upon this wide world's ungainly face
For mortal man.

"Nothing but a trilobite!!"
Why, before Pompeii's streets were
laid —
Long before the catacombs were made
This relic, *was*!
The Builder of the world was there
And spread his footprints everywhere,
And wrote his laws!

This petrified form —
These little fossils—granite blocks
Struck from the deep foundation rocks
By quarry-men's sledge
Are very old! no reckoning true
Can ever guide an idea to
Their marvelous age!
1852.

In Autumn

We walk abroad in sheltered ways
To breathe the spirit of these days—
To understand the noiseless strokes

That mark our maples and our oaks,
That glint with gold where hickory
reigns

And crimson all the sumac lanes.

Welcome Autumn, with unspent tears
Locked somewhere in thy marching
years,

Imparting sadness to the land and air
Which all our spirits learn to wear!

But new-born life of winter rye

Just catching now the delighted eye,
Sends out its freshness far and near

With beauty for the waning year;
While cornfields gray, perhaps our
pride,

Outspread across this country wide
Are wonderful in charms and cheers

In rustling, drooping *hursting* ears!
And how they strike with tones of song
Every breeze that floats along.

The corn squirrel in fur covering
Which in the early days of Spring

Dug the corn from many a hill

Is stealing from the farmer still;

But no one minds him now, for see
There is plenty for such rogues as
he—

And some to spare, now and then—

Luscious meals for the prairie hen.
And jay and quail (on plenty's plains)
That gather up the wasting grains!

Seldom were gems on Autumn's brow,
Richer than her gifts are now;

Orchards outdo in offering

Their gracious promise of the spring,
Strewing in profusion sweet

A great abundance at our feet;

And acorns in their coats of brown

In quiet groves are rattling down:

Each insect by the season stirred

Is vying with the happy bird.

All nature rich in Heaven's care

Is grander in this bracing air:

All kingdoms of their treasures give

That needy child of earth may live:

Changing tints for the eye to see,

And *all this good for such as we!*

O, in the spirit's strange unrest,

Let this gladness be expressed,

Let tongues reveal the free-gift sight—

And we too take our pens and write!

We strive to paint on humble scrolls
Of worship that arrests our souls
Of beams, from which the cloud is
brushed

Of nature with the tumult hushed—
Of goodness on our pathway shed,
Of blessings on the reverent head!

O, how can heart refuse its praise

How rest we thus in careless ways

In scenes of gladness—rural grace

In land of plenty, and in peace?

1883.

Autumn Leaves

Sweet voiced pedestrians

Pass up the roadside street.

Picking here and there a wondrous leaf

That flutters to their feet.

Blossom time is over

The scene around is new

Brilliant tintings, in changing color

Are lifted to their view.

Autumn and children meet—

Children in *their* Spring,

Brushing from their paths, with little
feet

A leafy carpeting!

Springtime in *their* lives

But *Autumn* in the year!

And these pictures which this one day
gives

Are adding to its cheer.

Friends' Meeting House

(At Shamokin, Pa.)

We are trudging up a rocky path just
now—

(In remniscent mood)

A granite path that leads us on and
through

A quiet hillside wood.

We move along in restful calm content,

And kneeling, scrape aside

Brown leaves, dead and brittle, to find
a plant

To us "out west" denied.

It is the checker berry—"winter
green"

Pressed closely to the ground,

And is neglected never when it's seen
In haunts where it is found.

O, interesting path—at the summit
stands—

For many years has stood

The unpretending Meeting House of
Friends

Anear the shady wood.
 Evenings alone in the twilight hour
 (The day's deep thinking time)
 I return to those grounds, and to our
 Old Home (in mind) *yet mine*.

Benevolence

Like, with holy oil annointed,
 Soothing human grief,
 Moves the hand that's God-appointed
 In benevolent relief.

And wonderful, that to the giver
 The richest blessings flow,
 Uplifting helper and receiver
 In the special overflow

Of human kindness — tenderness —
 The round of greed, above:
 Portraying in truth, a kinship with
 Our Savior's love.

Giving Thanks

Now therefore our God we thank
 thee, and praise thy glorious name.
 I Caronicles, chap. 29, verse 13.

A devoted, discouraged mother
 In cheer (all outward) led
 A little group of hungry children
Half supperless, to bed!

She lingered there beside her darlings.
 With tears kept bravely down —
 Told them of other needy children
 (More wretched than her own)

Sleeping beneath some sheltering door-
 way

Or in some wind-swept hall,
 Clad too thin for the chilly weather,
With no supper at all!

Thus her listening group, grew thank-
 ful

For blessings meager — sweet!
 Oh amidst the world's thanksgivings
 Patnos and praises meet.

The Snow Finch

Ah, the air is growing colder —
 Is full of gloomy haze;
 A threat of storm is in the sky,
 Complaint on ev'ry breeze;
 And look for snow, in answer
 Unto the glory call:
 Perhaps in early evening
 The soft white clouds will fall.

The finches flew in flocks to-day
 (With fluttering notes of glee)
 Like raindrops hailing through the
 hedge,

Or windstorm in the tree,
 And singing (was it?) through the air
 The notes their needs invite,
 Hearing perhaps in upper waves
 The storm reserved for night!

For night! And with gathering dark-
 ness

What messages float by
 With the whistling boreal blast
 In melancholy cry!
 Are all the creatures in our caring
 In pity sheltered warm?
 Home fowls, kine, and faithful Dick,
 For hear the fretting storm!

How it grumbles o'er the prairies,
 And moans around the door:
 Come closer to the stove, sweet ones
 While lonely night winds roar.
 Where now is the winsome snowbird —
 Where rests his little wing?
 Dear child, our Father careth
 For the little trusting thing.

The Closing Year

Let us not be as the unthankful are
 Who give no praise!
 We are bidding adieu to the grand Old
 Year

That is passing away in the Winter
 drear!

But see, there are garlands around his
 bier
 For the crowning of the worthy, and
 hear

What he says.

He is leaving to the faithful, a memory
 Of things well done;

A wonderful content for spirits pure —
 For hearts that are rich in joys that
 endure;

O, life, built on the rock that stands
 secure

With a *rest*, unknown to the evil-doer —
 This heritage won.

He is leaving abundance throughout
 our land

And peace on these shores!
 His harvests waved in the freshness of
 light --

Were wreathed in promises hopefully
 bright —

They yielded (with Industry ordered
 aright)

The garnerers of treasure, beautiful sight
 In bountiful stores!

His orchards on prairie and hillside
slopes

Bent with blessings down:
While the gladdening and the chang-
ing view
With pencilings of sunshine streaming
through
Gave visions of grandeur, and sweet
and new,
Fruit tinted and glinted with golden
hue
And russet and brown.

His wild plants too that were scattered
abroad

In the hedge and the nook
Kept beckoning lovers out in the breeze
Through landscapes fair with flowers
and trees —

With sweets for more than the birds
and the bees:

What lessons were studied and read
from these

In nature's book.

Then let us not go up as the thankless
do

To the New Year's morn!

There are deeds to do. Each act up-
raises,

Or takes from the soul its noblest
graces;

Accords the heart to its highest praises
Or drowns it deep in the world's wide
mazes

Poor, forlorn!

Then as the Old Year glides under the
stars —

Out at the western door.

And the New comes in from the realms
of rest —

Comes in through tears of the morning
mist,

Let us, *let us* see that our lives be blest
With the joy and peace that will last
and last

Forevermore!

A Winter Storm

Last night in fitful wakeful rest

We listened to the house dog's cries.
The wind kept wailing from the west
In sullen sobs and sighs.

But morning breaks with clouds of
snow

Swirling and sweeping with the
breeze.

The weather gauge is falling low —
Descending by degrees.

All Nature feels the sudden change —
The winter's natural call
Screaming over our prairie plains
In breathings masterful.

Let sparrows roost in barns to-night
Thoughtless boys at your common
chores;

They come with chirps in half affright
Behind the banging doors.

Learn by our own need of Higher Care!
Let your protecting hands extend
In merciful kindness everywhere
Where weakness needs a friend.

The Wild Hen

A vernal morning is gladly breaking
In mellow sound

From unseen altars, and awaking

Through fields around
(Till heart and ear hath caught the
essence

Afar and dim)

A *wild bird's joy*—its effervescence —

Its morning hymn!

Over the boundless prairies booming.
Nor harsh, nor strong

But heralding angels, coming

With hope and song —

With treasures of bud and blossoming:
New life begins!

Sing wild hen, for Sol is loosening

The winter chains!

Sing, sing! Coo out thy glad existence,
Thy wild life wants,

And taste the kernal (sweet subsis-
tence)

In joyous haunts:

But hush. oh hush! Thy glad voice
stifle —

It was *too* sweet!

A hand has grasped the cruel rifle,
And restless feet

Tread thither! Oh wild birds feeding
In your ranging run,

So beautiful and all unheeding

The sportsman's gun!

A boy returns from the vanquished
field

In unconcern!

But frightened birds that his rifle
killed

To accusers turn.

Inebriety

Within a marble-bounded lawn
And bathed in sunset gleams like gold
Two young maidens slowly strolled.

How restful seemed the promenade,
For who could push the closed door
To read a guarded sorrow o'er?

All in sweetness like the flowers
Were they to me — the sisters there
With sunset glintings through their
hair.

Neighbors knew that tottering steps
Oft crossed the lawn at eventide
But what cared they to know beside?

At last *we* knew the curse of wine
Hovered around and over them
Like snapping flowers from a stem!

Mother and children wept alone
And uncomplaining, lest a stain
Molest the honored fam'ly name,

Both held the tired mother's hands
While the elder, more fragile girl
Paler grew—more spiritual!

And more quiet and more resigned
As dews distilled from angel wings
Athwart a heart's unmurmurings.

Ah, the new—the new—Jerusalem!
A mother kneels beside a bed,
Her arm beneath a loved one's head.

A wine lost father totters near;
She turns from *him*, a troubled brow—
This first-born darling *passing* now!

A soul disrobing for its rest;
Hush, catch the whisper, low and sad,
"I'm going, O, O, I'm so glad."

The Beer Cup

Over to the grove land, this morning —
The tall bright trees among
Where wonderful leaves, in adorning
Beckoned and lured us along,
We drove, with spirits enchanted
In the glory that fills,
Or pervades the air, sweet scented
Which Autumn distills:

Spread out before us, what greenery
In rye field robes to-day,
What snatches of beauty—of scenery
In its dreaminess lay:
There were stars of purple in masses —
And all fringing the stream:
O Jordan, what kingdoms it passes,
And what pastures outgleam;

What gardens and houses in-woven
With creepers and vines:
See too, how the sunbeam is golden
In the leaf where it shines!
And see in the midst of this sweetness
Seems charmed into life
A neat little home in its greatness!
But listen! There's strife!

Then oh what availeth this beauty
Around and above
Where nothing seems wakened to
duty—

Nothing wanting but love!
The lord of the home in his potions
Is starving his soul!
He boweth his head in devotions
To the maddening bowl!

Appledore

Celia Thaxter, the author, died at Appledore, Isle of Shoals, aged 58 years. She was born in 1836 at Portsmouth N. H. She was the daughter of Thomas H. Loughton, and at the age of 16 married her guardian Levi L. Thaxter. Since his death she lived at Appledore.

Most tenderly we search for Appledore
A little island in the stormy sea;
A history's woven on that lonely shore
With living thoughts and deeds.
We scan them o'er
Most tenderly.

On solid earth the hums of restless care
In shop and mill, rolled safely
through the night;
While on the rocks, climbing a light-
house stair
A fearless girl for years, sent out
from there
A warning light.

And like a saving light that poet mind
(Though passed from Earth) in silent
power
Is sending still, in written words un-
dimmed
A help, like from the lamps she
nightly trimmed
At Appledore!

Illumination

There came to us a season of mists with
rains —
A weary continuance of dullness;
All the frost-bitten herbage over the
plains

Sleazy and wet. Discomfort in fullness!

But behold the mists are all risen; and lo,

The darkened lowering clouds are broken

And springing to his feet, impatient to go

A chore lad like a prophet has spoken!

He gazed for a while on the light outspread

And on the beauty that Nature was voicing,

Then lifted his hat to a reverent head
And went out into sunlight, rejoicing.

We had not thought, in his ordinary face—

Only ordinary care disclosing,

That all of a sudden, we are led to trace

A divinity there, reposing!

Words are too weak to express (his manner said)

The heights and the depths of this feeling:

O, grand is the spirit, that thus can be fed

With the glory that God is revealing!

Adams

She had passed, we knew, the youth of her days,

A matron unlearned, uncouth in her ways;

Her hair was white with the burden of years—

Of toil unremitting—worrying cares!

Her garb not fashioned for beauty and grace

Developeu no charm to her vacant face.

This was Adams. The sad picture is true

Of a traveler treading a life-time through

On to the end! Oh rudderless, drifting—

Passing her years with no uplifting—

No thought of duty—no ennobling aim

To deepen a Soul's enjoyment in Time!

We thought her heartless—a lover of strife,

But we were too young to study her life—
Too young to analyze Adams—her law,
The exterior was the garb we saw.

But now in review—looking over that ground

Many an excuse for her deeds are found.

There was withal, in surroundings so rude

A gleam of sunshine, of beauty and good.

We remember once, as a neighbor passed

Her low deep window, how he was impressed

By the whiteness of her clean ruffled cap

And open Bible spread out on her lap,

Searching for divinity all alone,

Lifting her voice in an audible tone

In the tongue of her people over the sea
As if Goodness were struggling for mastery!

As if dark clouds she were brushing aside

For a glimpse of God, to none denied!

That one hour seemed holy, but through the week

Dreadful sometimes were the words she would speak!

Strange contradictions! Ah little she knew,

But unto that little, perhaps she was true.

Reviewing those weaknesses now, that strife

We study in pity, the threads of her life!

We recall her garden: its pickets were set

In the heart of a meadow with dew drops wet,

And the pathway there from the hard road seen

Was brightly fringed with the meadow's green;

And once we rejoiced as she bade us wait.

And guided us up to the garden gate

And pushed it ajar. O plain to be seen
Among her own flowers, she was the queen!

What a study! A garden beautiful

Wrought by her loving care—untiring toil.

Can a soul be base, though weak in saintly powers

That can love and toil for the sake of flowers?

Rural Blessings

Far out in the country, in a quiet dell
 A family of children were wont to dwell;
 They knew most of the birds of every name
 That each new year with the mellow spring time came;
 They sang with them, and hummed with the pretty bees,
 And they watched the first blossoms crowning the trees;
 They knew of the tilling of garden and farm
 Where the sweetness of sunshine was nestling warm;
 When the June cherry on the margin of streams
 And scented Gaultheria in pine wood scenes,
 And the purple heath fruit in mountain dew
 Were ready to yield their abundance, they knew;
 They knew too when the nuts on the hills should stir
 And the tall chestnut should burst its prickly bur.
 But all through the lovely springtime's blushing reign
 And all through the summer's blooming, waving grain
 Their busy hands grew hard with toil; and they
 Paused at the close of a sultry weary day
 To see a guest from the distant city—fair—
 So free he seemed from their familiar care!
 Could a visitor now, our eyes behold
 Step down from mystic streets inlaid with gold
 No greater nor wiser could possibly seem
 Than this strange guest, in children's simple dream.
 But long strong years have flown, and these have told
 How that city with its streets as rich as gold
 Is tethered by a tie of needs and charms
 To the far off country with its prosperous farms!
 And city and country—the dwellers there-of
 O, are bound by a tie, a duty, a love
 Holier and sweeter than mortal can give
 And near to this Ruler, the reverent live.

The Old Liberty Bell

The old Liberty Bell that has been in Independence Hall in Philadelphia since 1753, has been out of use since 1835, it having been cracked. When sent to the World's Fair at Chicago in 1893 it was accompanied by four policemen whose business it was to take charge of it until its return to Philadelphia.

We passed with the multitude in at the gate
 Of the new "White City" that was reared of late

Like a nestling thing
 In Chicago's arms; and we wondering went
 To meet what the far-off nations had lent
 Useful—interesting.

We almost closed our eyes, sometimes, in pain;
 There seemed too much for the alert, but tired brain

To fully realize;
 People of whom we had only known in books
 Now stood full in life, with strangest ways and looks
 Before our eyes.

Yet in the midst of all, it is queer to tell
 That we lingered long beside a cracked old bell

That rings no more;
 The secret: it clanged the possibility
 Of each and every future state to be
 On Columbia's shore.

Surely, had its strength held on, there would have rung
 In clarion tones, from its historic tongue

Peal after peal
 A notice of Lincoln's glorious decree
 Which set the American bondmen free!
 A stroke so grand! Old Bell!

And there's another blight, a scourge, a curse
 Dominating o'er our happy land, and worse—

Over all lands behold!
 O, when can *new Liberty Bells* ring and ring
 To announce that Alcohol's no longer king
 But is righteously controlled!
 1893.

Among the Native Wild Flowers

Surrounded by fruitful lands—by farms
well-tilled
There lays in the sunshine, a wonder-
ful field—
Wonderful, since never a plowshare's
been known
To have turned the sod down—unplow-
ed—unmown!
It is a farmer's green pasture, and
though sweet,
Was reserved to be trodden by ranging
feet;
And hither we rambled, and knowingly
met
This primeval meadow, which
Heaven's hand hath set
With native flowers. O, the beauty
and grace
Decorating with glory, this lonely
place;
In seclusions, they tremblingly stand—
These old-time flowers of the prairie
land.

Herds of kine go tramping o'er the
blossom beds—
Crushed violets lift in tears, poor man-
gled heads;
But despite the careless hoof, and
munching bite,
Millions yet match the skies, in soften-
ing light.
Then too, the American cowslip's here—
the *Shooting Star*
With pendant, drooping blooms; how
lovely they are!
Tender and delicate, and as pure as
Truth—
Encircled around, entwined with our
youth—
With the days we go back to, into the
past!
O, flowers that no hand planted—no
hand dressed
None but the mighty Word that called
them to blow
Richer than the glory that Solomon
knew.

The Little Estray

Crowds of people have all trooped by,
Leaving loneliness complete—
Only this little stray *cur*, and I
The veils of night to meet!

But the clear moonlight in its blessed
calm

Was never lovelier;
And the heavy shadows, where I am
Creep to the open door.

A low snatch of song across the mea-
dows

From some belated boy
Grows fainter as the traveler goes
To his employ.

But not alone: angels my ways attend:
There's solace in that thought;
But who'll care for this, my canine
friend

Thus strangely hither brought?
I look upward with happy trustful mind
Safe in Higher Power,
While here at my feet, to-night, I find
A friend—a little lower—
Gazing up with watchful earnest eyes,
Mute pleadings for a crust!
And can an answered prayer for me
arise

If I refuse this trust?

Singing at Sunrise

Slow and sleepily and unrested
Rising from a cozy bed
I saw a morning in grandeur vested
Ere the night was fled;
The world seemed new in shadowy
keeping
With unfamiliar scenes,
And there was yet an hour for sleeping
For others—in dreams.
But see! I saw the daylight breaking
Forth from the reddening east
And O, enjoyed the great awakening
For man, fowl and beast.
A flock of birds flew from the hedge—
Settled on a pasture bar:
Praising songs burst from that humble
stage,
And I was auditor.

May

Earth's canopy is robed in blue,
Celestial grandeur pressing through!
No hint of cloud is on the sky
And only sunlight sparkles by,
In cognizance of dewy gems
That rests on grass as diadems:
Through bloom and fragrance breaks
this day—
This one sweet, peaceful morn in May.

Her breath where'er 'tis floating up
Has dipped into some chalice'd cup—
Has kissed the sweets from bursting
buds

Along the hedges—in the woods,
And offers now no joy more sweet
To bathe the brow and lip and cheek—
An offering in morning's hour
Of nectar bath from opening flower.

And angels flying hither—see —
With blossoms for the budding tree —
With verdure for the harrowed plain,
Blessing all the May time reign,
Be it flower, or be it field
With sunlit promise of the yield,
Be it orchard in flush of bloom
Or thicket with its wild perfume—

Be it young life in shifting scene—
The colt and calf in pasture green;
Be it bird with plumage bright,
Or sober gray that meets the sight,
Each dowered with a ray divine
That God permits on earth to shine:
All lead us on to understand
The movement of a Perfect Hand!

No pen can write these blessings out
Strewed here and there, and round
about;

Then catch them heart, or soul or eye
Ere all these fleeting graces die—
O, catch and hold and *live* these charms
The glories of our farmers' farms—
Shimmering leaves—meadows—grain-
fields—all

Ere they are gone beyond recall!

Let's breathe this essence breath-di-
vine.

For through it all doth goodness shine;
Enjoy in full this scented air —
A fragrance that is floating there
Until the soul of song be told,
Until the spirit be controlled,
Arising like this wondrous air
In song, in praise, in prayer.

A Sonnet for June

Awake my harp, thy strings attune
And warble now, the lays of June;
Call in from cloud and sky and air
A touch of wonder roaming there;
O, seal with *pen* this loveliness
Before the fleeting splendors pass;
Grasp a sense of the waving rye,
And the barley ere its beauties die!
O, bird, and song, and fruit and bloom
Crowded in this month of June!

All through the vaulted space above,
Outshining, fleecy cloud drifts move
Over—over, in masses rolled —
Seem sporting with the great sun's
gold,

Basking in light, to us appears
Until they shed their freight of tears,
Binding fast in glorious glow
Tender clasps for the arching bow!
O, hail beauteous promise, thrown
Across the lovely skies of June.

There's the brown bird, and how he
flies —

The song thrush with his melodies;
He clothes, (it seemeth so sometimes)
That song with sounds of fairer
climes,

Wafting along through purple air,
Astrange to woe, astrange to care,
Lulling in peace, the ear, the heart,
So free from every jar of art
And fresh with every trill and tune
Trembling in the joys of June.

Amid the foliage, rich and green,
Of the cherry, (now our queen)
And peeping out like bashful eyes
Within the midst of mysteries
The juicy red ripe fruitage glows,
As the mewing catbird knows,
Dangling on some distant limb
One half in hope, and half in hymn.
O, birds take now your luscious boon
Ripening in the suns of June.

There too are rare plants in the lanes
Where first the sweet wild rosebud
reigns

And where wee blossoms in the path
Are sweet as any garden bath;
While maidens in their evening stroll
Are coming home with baskets full,
With rapturous tales of golden shades,
And wondrous blue in grassy glades,
Of pearly white, and dark maroon
All in this joyous month of June.

Oh dear great Hand, that made them
all

And blest the world so beautiful;
Remove the *veil* from blinded eyes
That in the way of Progress lies;
Teach hearts to see this lovely Light,
This goodness, so serenely bright,
And lift the weak all strife above
Into the fullness of Thy love
To life that's life. Such glory shown
As figured through one day in June.

Spare the Birds

A beautiful pigeon (ranked with the dove)

In nestmaking skilled,
Is busily building, we believe

Where we would, she should build.
Her pinions, are they grey, or are they blue,

Or a mingling of both—
With a glimmering of bronze at times
In the plumaging growth?
Bird beautiful and time-honored-be-
loved

Such as Noah sent forth—
And later, the carrier from *Nansen*
In the drear icy north.

A sportsman went to a shooting last week—

A game he surely loves!
He carried a cage of imprisoned birds:
We fear they all were doves!
Their presence in our midst is peace—
peace—

A peace to understand;
And in their innocence, they seem
So near the Maker's Hand!
What if the needless misery that stains
Breast of the bleeding dove,
Should place a check on the ruthless hand

With a *scar* for the heart of love?

My Thrush

Great wide fields of tasseling maize
A promise richly sown,
Are offering to the admiring gaze
A beauty all their own.
We watch the graceful stamened top—
We note the silken hair
And see (though slowly creeping up
and up)
Life for a golden ear.

All these we value, deeply stirred
Among such gifts of green;
We see the butterfly, the bee and bird
Commingle in the scene.
Peace and trust; love and happiness
Form canopies around
A foretaste see of perpetual bliss—
A step on holy ground.

But our surroundings change. Oh
Time!

Will ours be cloud, or sky?
We're in the midst of things so pure—
sublime

But now we hear a cry!
Already there is suffering!!

Ah from the willow's bough
My brown thrush has fallen that came
to sing

A happy bird till now!

This wounded pet a child brings in
(Some neighbor shot in fun)
In smothered tears our eyes survey the
sin

To him a thoughtless one!
What ails the sense that can enjoy
Such *needless* suffering?
Only a bird that some one's boy
Brought down with broken wing!

Along the Buffalo

In the pleasantest part of June
We sauntered there one afternoon;
We *four* sat down upon a rock
While round us romped our little flock
Of children, restless, laughing, gay
In childhood's bright unclouded play:
O, keen enjoyment—unawares
With happiness so truly theirs;
They picked the pebbles from the brook
And all their hands could hold they
took—

Espied in water, slightly bent,
The pearly bloom of an arrow-plant—
Reaching for it with merry cries,
They snapped it off—a rare surprise.
Then they strove for the lily stem
That safely held his cap from them
Quivering like a golden boat,
Upon the quiet Dam afloat!
O, young life, tramping o'er the bluff
With prattle, song and shout enough,
And romp, and race!—Our little flock
Wearily return to us—upon the rock!

We sat and watched them (thoughtful,
grave)

With garnet fragments splash the wave,
But thought of scenes that interpose—
(Enacted ere *their* suns arose)
Between the *then* and *now* whose light
Is fresh again before the sight.
In retrospect, we two returned
To where those winter visions burned
In record strong—indelible
Upon the tablet of the soul.
That fierce winter in all its charms
With months of snow borne in his arms
Came down on wings of fleecy white
And drifted to our dell at night:
It barred *without*, the great world's din,
And shut us quiet inmates, in!

But in exchange of thought, our band
Found riches rare at its command;
With Fremont in his aims and hopes
We climbed with him, the mountain
slopes

And on the calm Pacific strand,
Seemed at times with him to stand,
Exploring canons—trails—seeing
What stirred and thrilled a great ex-
plorer's being.

But Time wore on—the Volume
through,
A thirst awoke for something new;
Then came postman (fresh interest)
A long delayed and weary guest.
What tidings, as the mail-bag whirled
He brought us from the outside world;
New thought came in, like fresh repast
But the winter time grew *long*, at last
We learned to watch for meteors,
And often heard the storm's guitars:
And strange what zest a wolf's wild
bark

Can throw into the midnight dark;
Eyes peered through the gathering
storm

For a single glimpse of his shaggy
form

But the hungry whelp, he went his
way—

Was gone before the break of day!
At last, at last, in our cozy home
We longed for the first dear signs of
the Spring to come.

One eve we marked as the sun sank low
A rosier tint on his pathway glow,
And higher in heaven, his circle lay
As he rose to climb the skies next day;
The blue jay screamed with a shriller
start

And the frost let go the streamlet's
heart;

The snows uncapped the bluff bank
brow,

And dripped to the sleezy pools below;
From ample roof, and from window
blinds—

Dropped melting mass like crystal
gems:

O, 'ere we thought, the Spring's sweet
spell

Came creeping down our lovely dell—
Nursing beneath the sunniest sod
Hepatica's pale impatient bud—
That flushed in bloom, a keen surprise
Amidst the Winter's last goodbys!
The meadow then, where the icy sheen

Had lain so long, assumed its green,
And welcomed soon, with a loving hold
The cowslips in their robes of gold!

O, day by day so rapidly—
There seemed no end of things to see;
Such new strange plants of every shade
Starring afresh the long neglected
glade;

And new strange trees (now known so
well)

Hung out their catkins in the dell;
The wind flowers came, and lost their
white

As cypripediums burst in sight;
While overhead, from bough to bough
Wild vines kept weaving through and
through

Their fleecy threads on the wildwood
loom

With all their graceful louns in bloom.
Prairies through centuries of sleep
With undeveloped wealth—treasures
deep

Lay spread out around—beautiful—
Subduing heart—refining soul!

And welcome, welcome, all that's good
Let progress stand where waste once
stood

Let wheat fields wave—let corn be
grown

Where only tangled grass was known
And as the years go fleeting past
Remember this, we've loved them all,
the first and last.

Invalid Life

In from the fields, and from lowlands
fair—

In from the fragrance of summery air,
We sat down one day in a restful chair
By an invalid's side!

Our minds seemed out in the meadows
green—

In the midst of gladness where we had
been

And our hearts were full of the things
we had seen

And heard and enjoyed!

Oh, oh (thought we sitting by her side)
Is every good from that head denied,
Pressing the pillow from side to side
In restless dream!

Never a tread through the ample yard—
Never a footstep on the grassy sward,
Only a bed, but firm faith in the Lord—
A reliance on Him!

Sad thinking beamed from those lustrous eyes

In questioning, and pondering replies,
How soothing that tender memories
Came thronging on.

"Out through this window (she said)
afar

Over fields of grain—and how lovely
they are

I see visions of beauty—sweet and fair,
As in years ago!"

Near her stood a vase with fresh supplies—

With blossoms sweet—of the deepest
dyes,

She saw our glance, and there came to
her eyes

A mist of tears!

"These are tokens of sympathy and
hope,

And each little petal in chalice cup
Lifts a message of blessing—comfort up

Though unawares—

To dear *givers*, as well as to me."

None do a kindness, we're learning to
see

But *they too drink of that*, (that's offered
free

As a fountain of light.)

All those who strive for another's gain—
To relieve and soften sadness—pain,

Grow nearer like Him, whose angels
reign

In Rest and Right.

Visiting the Old Home Valleys

Why should the romance of common
life

Ordinary in its peace and strife

Cling to the memory (tempest tossed)

When much that we'd keep and hold,
is lost?

It must be for a purpose, displayed—

The changing contrasts of light and
shade!

Just now in review, how strange it
seems

That one forgotten, so fills these
dreams,

One like the oak, whose hist'ry is found
Rooted figuratively in the ground,

Plodding through daily toil, o'er and
o'er

As she did for years and years before
In patient rounds.

After years of wand'ring and sojourn,
To these valleys we once more return
To where in happy, though by-gone
days,

We watched the resinous pine-knots
blaze

Upon the flag-stone hearth. Even then
Our neighbor *Sophie* seemed old as
when

(That is in her ways) we find her now,
Deep worn wrinkles on her sun-tanned
brow.

We met her as one day we drove
Upon the highway, down the hills we
love,

Smiling as she tugged her grocery load
Afoot, on the old familiar road:

The high noon sun with blistering heat
Burned the red shale earth about her
feet

Where she stood.

Meeting her thus is what made it seem
As though *twenty years* were but a
dream;

That we were back again with tears
and smiles,

Back in Time as well as back in miles!

But the gentle hands that here we
press,

And eyes suffused with tenderness
Ignore the changes on brow and hair
Though the full receipts are written
there!

Like halos of beauty round us thrown
Is the *love* that we have always known,
So true, so sweet, unsullied as day
Which Time in his flight snatched not
away,

But left it, sweetest jewel of all
When he took our youth beyond recall
And streaked our locks in gray!

Hallowed memories, these valleys hold—
Countless charms to us they yet unfold.
Here glides Roaring creek, still hem-
lock-hedged

Whose channel romantic—granite-
ledged

Continues dark in its thick damp shade
Verging among spruces down the glade.
Where a long-time friend in loneliness
(She unconscious of isolation was)

Dwelt amidst sublimities divine:
Her life happier perhaps than mine!
Let's hold once more in memory's
power

The fullest sweetness of this hour:
Let the mountain breeze our temples
lave

With holy goodness like a wave
In Summer shower.

We have trod o'er prairie wastes, and
 stood
 Where all that God has made, seemed
 good;
 Where Nature's lavishing hand be-
 stows
 As fair a flower as ever grows,
 And stretched a surface grand and
 wide,
 And what human needs have been sup-
 plied.
 The summer's golden grain now *har-
 vested*
 And rustling cornfields promising
 bread!
 Boundless ranges for colts and kine
 Are added gifts from hand Divine:
 Thankless soul arise! Dumb heart *pray!*
 Behold these blessings on your way,
 So fraught with peace, and free from
 ills
 But forgive us, if we dream of hills
 Afar away!

Early Birds

They're here in our midst—the early
 birds of Spring.
 Hopping about, peeping, chirping and
 warbling;
 Alighting here and there, awake with
 all their might
 And where—we wonder where they'll
 choose a building site.
 The red-breast robin continues a low
 sweet hymn,
 And we think she'll choose for a home,
 some apple limb
 Where moss will be carried, and dead
 grass and leaves,
 And thus her home will be sweet in
 the apple trees;
 Five little white eggs, in time that
 queen will own—
 Or seven at most all spotted with deli-
 cate brown.
 O, right here by my house, my welcome
 trustful guest,
Please build, (trilling and singing) thy
 leaf-lined nest;
 Work and whistle among my shrubs—
 all unafraid
 And offer to us free, a Spring morn
 serenade.
 O, makers of glad music—ah little
 preachers too,
 We would that never a woe should
 come to you!

Free Gifts

My neighbor has a field of clover
 In thrifty nodding flowers;
 And is it strange, such fragrant sweet-
 ness
 Should be so fully ours?
 Now all the cool lanes in the country
 Rampant are, with their wild show!
 They seem the rarest of great gardens—
 Blue and golden, and white as snow.
 And all these, as we pass and re-pass,
 Are ours—yours and mine!
They all are free! God's great handi-
 work—
 With every touch divine!
 O, ours with every sense awake
 To recognize the gift:
 And base the mind that can reject
 A glory thus bequeathed!!

A Little Lesson

A cluster of mints in a quiet pasture
 grew
 And it flourished and blossomed, yet
 no one knew
 Until disturbing pressures from a heavy
 tread
 Trampled rudely down, each lowly
 little head!
 Then came a delicate sweetness, and
 no complaint
 Announcing the presence of this fra-
 grant mint.
 Here is a lesson, like a breath from
 Heaven
 Forgive! forgive! that we may be for-
 given.

In Memoriam: J. H.

When clouds around are grim and gray,
And our hearts despond,
How strengthening to see and feel
Illumined rays that sometimes steal
From "silver linings" that reveal
Glories yet beyond.

We knew a worker, true and strong—
Strong in giving,
Who strove to lift, with conscious power
His fellow creatures kindly o'er
Chasms of woe, unto the shore
Of higher living!

But now beyond the things of Earth,
That one is risen!

Whate'er the miracle of dying is—
Whate'er there be in mysteries,
A glorious crown is surely his
In scenes elysian!

Tears may announce translations
Of the dear departed:

But to the realms supremely blest—
Into peace and everlasting rest
We know that barque has safely passed
With the angel-hearted.

In Memory of J. P.

(Of Sterling, Ill.)

One less in the Church militant
Missed from an earnest band
And one more, triumphantly
Safe in the spirit land!

A beautiful gathering home
In close of Time's last stage,
The pangs of every suffering
On earth's great pilgrimage

Thrown aside—the care laid down
And "all is well—right!"
As the passing spirit seeth
In unclouded Sight!

It matters not what tired paths
The faltering footsteps knew,
The crowning of an upright life
Has helped the faithful through.

Under the shade of evergreens
In sweet undying trust,
Is laid the precious clay to rest
Beside its kindred dust!

Twenty years before, and we
(Some now with silvered hair)
Stood here beside his *mother's* grave:
In silent prayer.

The wildness of the prairieland
Was full of nature's grace;
And then no fence—no line was drawn
About this burial place:

The youthful city just beyond
In its upspringing stride,
The children of this mother's care
Had welcomed to its side,

And like a portion of its life,
And knitted with its growth
Is he, who's laid this burden down
For an immortal youth!

From different vineyards round about
Our Father's children come
And stand in reverent silence near
A brother's closing tomb!

One less in the militant church
Missed from an earnest band
O, one more, triumphant soul
Safe in the spirit land!

7th Mo., 28th, 1876.

Naaman.

A remarkable story in Scripture
Seemingly illumined in light
Is clothing a pen with expressions—
With beautiful visions, to-night.
'Tis the record of Naaman, a captain
In the martial hosts of the king—
One honored greatly with distinctions
That triumphs in battle may bring.

But above all these worldly illusions,
It seems a little Hebrew slave
Brought unto him a safer glory
Than all his deeds of valor gave!
And Bible records extending onward
As our mental visions rise,
Unveil to us the solemnity
Of her tender pitying eyes—

As she studied so reflectively
The plague upon her master laid!
Which all human healing failed to
reach

Thus saw the captive Hebrew maid.
The mission of her Syrian bondage
Right here transcendantly appears:
Then in wisdom's unselfish pleadings
And tenderness, akin to tears

She speaks! "Would that my lord were
with the prophet—

(A suggestive little prayer)
—With the prophet in Samaria."

Surely there would be healing there!
So he came to Elisha—(this captain)
Came to the prophet, as we read,
Who taught the afflicted Syrian
That the true God—is Lord indeed!

But the prophet's mandates were so simple--

--Simple and so easily tried
That the haughty Naaman despised them

In his weak and worldly pride!
The world still owns lofty minded people

Who might aid any Christian call
Should this come unto them in wonders:
But sometimes such depise the small.
Yet this leper learned an obedience--
Crushed out his needless--helpless pride--

Bathed in the waters of the Jordan
And came forth humbly purified!

Awaken Farmer!

Over the fields, the sunbeams are streaming--

In through windows of sleepers beaming

With cheering light;
And on distant plains the fowls are screaming

Awakening toilers sweetly dreaming
Visions of night.

O, get up busy farmer, 'tis morning;
Dew sparkles in matchless adorning

Over the plain --
Has fallen in silence without warning,

And even the pastures are turning
To deeper green.

The skies too are bluer and serener
All the fields are fresher and greener
Than for many a day;

A thrush is singing--have you seen her?

Is caroling anear our window
And floats away!

There's been a dash through the night
of showers

Bathing this beautiful land of ours --
--This bountiful land;

Now where the tenderest of sunlight
pours

Look out for life in delicate flowers
On every hand--

Along moist fence-rows, nodding their heads

And there are young violets in sheltered beds

Asleep in the grass
Out in the meadows, where their wild life spreads:

But the children find them in their tramps--their treads

As they leisurely pass.

They were bringing to us those fresh flowers

All the way in from hedges and bowers--

Such sweet bouquets!
Dear children of these neighbors of ours

Going before and after the Showers
To hedæes and by-ways!

They knew how we had liked the wild bloomers;

So they picked them, the early coners
On their way to school;

And now right here in quiet offerings
This gratefulness lives for the sweeter things

That keep life's pathway full!
We ask each year, when the flowers are new

We ask dear friends when we're thinking of you--

Whether kind thoughts return
What is holier in our checkered lives
Than the help which a loving friendship gives

And no deceit is worn?

A Child Orator.

An audience was expectantly awaiting
The rehearsal of a child
Who held the hands of loving parents,
debating,

Whether he could give delight--
Please an audience that night.

Toward the interesting boy all
thought seemed drifting

With a wave of interest;

He stepped briskly to the rostrum,
then uplifting

(With a start of deep surprise

At the crowd) his frightened eyes.

'Twas a picture worthy of an artist's power--

Of a writer's graceful pen,

And continues in returning, since that hour

With every outline free,
An offering to memory.

He stood like an orator--his fine eyes
shining

An unconscious tableaux there;

Then slowly bowing (a shapely head
inclining)

Burst out sobbing in child alarms

And rushed back to his father's arms.

Inexperienced children must sometimes
falter

In hard tasks before them laid,
Like to us who daily need a holy altar
When heavy our burdens grow
In life's turmoil, sorrow, woe!

A few tender words of whispered
comfort spoken
Brought the boy to his feet again,
"If papa will go with me." The
spell was broken—
The father drew wisely near—
His boy knew no more of fear.

Ah boy what a lesson from thee are we
learning

Studying scenes before us!
Oh all that's for us, let our hearts be
discerning!

On life paths, with God's outlining,
May a steadier light be shining!

So that we may live, that a Helper
eternal—

—Our Father may be near us!
For lo here is where the light supern-
al

In the midst of every throng
Makes willing workers strong.

By Their Fruits

Ye shall know them by their fruits:
(St. Matthew—Chapter VII.)

A thorny, cumbrous plum tree holds
A part of our garden ground;
But bye and bye, when bloom unfolds
Scattering sweetness round,
What a vision of beauty, in flaunting
white

Will entice the bee in his wander-
ing flight.

And as the varied seasons come
And go right onward from the Spring
There'll come to us the luscious plum
In sun-tingled coloring.

O, thorny tree, we have learned to
know thy fruit

And ask no fairer one as a substitute.

Then child of this life, ponder well!
Profession is only a name:

The deeds we do are what will tell,
No matter what we claim:
Every word and act to the surface
brought

Is the ripened fruitage of some latent
thought.

Ahasuerus.

Many years ago, in centuries gone
There sat upon the Persian throne
A monarch who in Sacred Writ, is
known

As the king, Ahasuerus.

We scan his history, that we may trace
Some great uplift for the human race;
He held the power; but the help and
grace

Were Vashti's, Esther's, Mordica's!
The royal palace in its flash of light

Shone, we're told, with gold and
silver bright,

And the pavements there were marble
(so they write—)

Were black and red, and blue and
white.

But the king sipped with friends from
cups of gold

The wine that such in abundance hold,
And like Esau, his blessed chances sold
'To inebriant appetite!

Feastings went on, though the Scripture
hath said

"Look not on the wine, when it is
red!"—

Drinking went on as the appetite led
With favored nobles and princes;

That carousal reached to the seventh
day,

(So we read) till the wine in its way
Held over the king, a dominant sway
Blunting—enslaving his senses!

He bade to his presence, Vashti, the
queen,

That her wonderful beauty be seen—
That she a part of *his* splendor, his sheen
And his riches, might shine.

But she, with a loftier sense endowed
And perhaps in mortification bowed
Refused to face the maudlin crowd
Drinking! And drunken with wine!

Amongst The Freedmen.

Right here in a land of Free Schools—
These great chances for all in life
Who strive with an honest, earnest
endeavor—

Right here in the midst of all these,
we cannot

Comprehend the dearth of real poverty
Known in the land of oppression
In the midst of mental darkness!

Yet right here in the midst of these,
 (Greatest of opportunities)
 Many bow to the *habit of drink*, and
 bind
 Themselves in thralldom, low, degrading
 To this master! Thus they ruin and
 destroy
 Their heaven-born chances in life
 And become as fettered slaves!

Wine and Slavery, twin blights! They
 Mingle in oppression—in wrong!
 A portrayal reaches us from the South-
 land,
 Fresh from fields where missionaries
 are toiling
 On for others, that the down-trodden
 may rise
 And the pitifully blinded
 May be aided to see.

This portrayal is of a lad
 Born low with those arising now
 From Vassalage into Freedom. While
 stepping
 From the darkness of servitude—slavery
 Into the brilliancy of accorded rights,
 Many see but dimly at first,
 Grasping the precious boon!

'Tis as passing from darkened rooms
 Into a great fullness of light;
 Can we marvel that unguided brain
 and eye
 So often fail, and that strong men like
 children
 Should also (thus blinded) sometimes
 trample down
 The loveliest buds of promise
 In their first unfolding beauty?

The parent of *this lad* saw not
 Nor understood yet, the dawning—
 The sure, glad in-coming of a new Era
 For their people! But this child—this
 sable boy
 Awakening to his human rights and
 needs
 And strong in faith, saw wistfully
 The ripening harvests ahead!

Catching the Alpha and Omega
 From the lips of careless comrades—
 The a, b, c, imperfect and uncertain,
 Yet nursing in brain the mystic key of
 lore
 He plants his feet upon the ladder's first
 round!
 What power now can keep him down?
 Neither rags, dirt, nor denials!

Pleadings may die away in air,
 Petitions for breadth, be refused—
 May though meant in kindness, be re-
 fused, denied
 And refused and denied too long! The
 pleader
 Breaks the trammels his restless eager
 feet
 Bear him on to higher fountains
 And to guardianship more healthful.
 Now upon the Christian portals
 Of the Freedmen's inspiring school
 We find this prophetic touching revela-
 tion;
 The Negro child, dark visaged, gazing
 in wonder
 Upon one pale brow within, whose word
 is law;
 And yet the whole band of children
 Give willing and loving heed.
 He stands irresolute—afraid;
 The courage that inspired, is gone!
 The sympathetic eyes of the one within
 Rest kindly upon this queer apparition
 In dirt and rags! Then in broken ex-
 pression
 Of slave dialect, comical,
 Pitiful, a voice begs to enter!
 Little freed slave! We recognize
 As we gather the whole picture—
 Past and present, *the utter desolation*
Settling like clouds of blight on morn-
ing hours;
 Then as tender plant, hurt, trod on, al-
 most killed
 He survives, with an upward bound
 And turns to the light!

The Teacher's Field.

Yes, 'tis nearly school-time, children—
 Our restless little band;
 The morning hours are gliding by
 As you around us stand;
 You came with sweetest offerings—
 The sweetest Flora knows,
 With fragrant plants from garden beds;
 From hedge, the pure wild rose.
 Your paths anear the grain fields lay—
 Their wealth by wavelets stirred,
 And voices blending tenderly
 Were all the sounds we heard;
 It was good to hear your shouting
 And happy prattling talk,
 As you, hurrying hither, came
 Running too glad to walk—

Running in to meet your teachers
 Whose love you knew you had,
 And ev'ry face was beautiful
 In innocence clad.
 Musing! Soon we thought, the reapers
 Moved on by human skill
 Will slash amidst the waving grain
 And clip the golden frill—

Will mow in long and graceful sweeps
 This nodding headed wheat!
 Teachers have a different field,
 But every class must reap!!
 The school-child's love's a coronal
 For all of us to wear;
 And sowing precious seeds of thought
 Requires a Christian care.

In closing! We'll turn to *Marys*
 Crowding about our feet;
 Of the names to woman given
 None more honored—sweet;
 They are as young and tender vines—
 (Needing a guidance, true!)
 —All these *Marys, Sarahs, Annies*,
 And strong-willed brothers too—

—*These little men*—boys of promise
 So separate in aims,
 And differing in intellect
 As well as christened names.
 One is a Benjamin Franklin—
 And another, a boy
 (As unlike “Old Hickory” though
 As grief contrasts with joy)

Is christened for Andrew Jackson!!
 O in life's destinies
 May he disarm unrighteousness
 With an iron will, like *his*!
 While *this Benjamin Franklin*, with
 No celebrated kite
 To send on message to the clouds
 To catch electric light,
 Has won an honored place right here
 As he with book and slate
 Stepped to his long accustomed seat
 In boyhood's merry gait.

Every school is rich in records—
 Its lights and shadows known;
 And now around these scattered flocks
 Are strong reflections thrown:
 Let Teachers lend assistance timely
 In hope, and love and prayer,
 Remembering the weakest lambs
 Need most a shepherd's care.
 1861.

Oak Tree School.

(In Camden, Delaware)

We see in reminiscent thought—
 In visions sweet and true
 The Old Oak Tree—the neat brick walk
 That guideth yet into
 The quiet hall, and then up stairs—
 The latch seems in one's hand:
 But pause! There's been a lapse of
 years!

Ah, can we understand
 That every pupil now within
 To us is new—is strange?
 Then here is where we must begin
 To realize the change!

'Tis idle to call the sweetly fair,
 In dear and childish grace
 To come to us as though a year
 Had scarcely run its race—
 To look for one familiar smile
 From our own Camden girls--
 For Susan's pleasant ways the while,
 And Annie's sunny curls—
 For the gay contagious laugh
 Of that once loyal band,
 Though oft it seems in kind behalf
 They yet around us stand.

We've come to see how sadly deep
 The cruelty appears
 Wakening the “seven sleepers” ’ sleep
 Of near two hundred years!
 Three long decades our records make
 Since we were there in youth—
 And wonderful as we awake
 And realize the truth!

How can we ever bear to meet
 Changes in the ones we love,
 To find the little racing feet
 In *grown-up* stations move.—
 To find for childhood's careless grace
 (In willful pathways led)
Here now, a woman's thoughtful face
 And sober ways, instead!

Oh can we ever understand
 As we these scenes, recall?
 Would almost ask clairvoyant hand
 To trace the ways of all:
 A few, we've learned, like lillies fair
 In the dew and bloom of life
 Were gathered home from scenes of
 care

And disturbing strife:
 And one, they tell us, wand'ring roams
 In mineral mining, delves:
 Others, (a few) have made them homes
 And joys unto themselves.
 But what of the many—of those
 Of whom we've lost the track?
 The written search light seldom throws,
 Its revelations back!

A Vision.

Watching beside a fevered brow
 On restless pillows tossing,
 I saw (glancing at the stars) how
 The weary night was passing!
 Slumber had found the suffering one
 Ere Sol was fairly risen,
 And I (the watcher's duties done)
 Saw, was it a vision?
 Transcending every human thought
 With angel presence thrilling,
 And all the space around, about
 The greatest peace was filling!
 All disappointments unextinguished —
 Lost every reach of sadness:
 The dearest hopes could be relinquished
 For this celestial gladness —
 For this benediction — lumination rare
 Draught of joy elysian!
 Behold the mental clouds oft called
 Dispair
 Vanished with the vision!

Out in the Country.

We wonder at times what the world is
 doing —
 We who are staying right here
 Watching plants in garden and truck
 patch growing,
 And the blossoms around us sweetly
 blowing
 In the Spring of the year.
 We trace colors on wings (beautiful
 pinions)
 In the families of birds;
 We investigate nests, and bird compan-
 ions
 With healthful interests, in these dom-
 inions
 So unlearned in words.
 Often we pause in the summer's unrests
 Just to listen to a dove!
 Oh is every home what wisdom invests
 As full of joy as the robin redbreast's
 In unflinching love?
 Many a life like our own, in this quiet
 Is peacefully passing along
 Untouched by the noise—the madden-
 ing riot—
 Untouched by the wild tumultuous spirit
 Of the restless throng.
 We love the sweetness of our seclusions
 Amid meadows and lanes.
 Partially free from outside intrusions
 That wreck the mind with heartless
 delusions
 And mental strains!

A Valentine.

'Tis near the eve of Valentine's —
 Already Cupid sings;
 In sentimental modest shrines
 We seem to hear the wings
 Of angels flying to and fro
 With messages so sweet,
 We long and love to see them go
 And come as friendships meet.
 They will bear from east to the west—
 From farm to town, forsooth
 What oft before hath been expressed—
 A sweet continued truth!
 And as ye fly, bright angels, oh,
 Upon your joyous way
 Some one will send a billet doux
 With words such only say.
 But *scorn* a comic libel passed
 For so sweet a flower;
 No bitterness in language dressed
 These dainty notes should mar!
 That is all. Fly on—serenely on
 With tender loving lines,
 And let the breath of truth be borne
 In scattering Valentines.

Unread Chapters.

Children are running by from school
 In skip and shout and play;
 And now their noisy nonsense
 We're stopping to survey.
 We too, a worn out schedule hold,
 Each name once more, let's note
 And gather up the threads of life
 As they before us float!
 One name recalls a winsome face,
 How oft we've thought of her;
 But now her happy laughing life
 Like school day dream, is o'er!
 She went away in girlhood bloom,
 A vision of surprise
 While sunshine of approaching years
 Seemed sparkling in her eyes.
 A little way she trod these paths—
 A few short years at best
 Then chose a Kansas pioneer
 And moved with him "out west"
 Whether her life were sad or sweet
 No line or word reveals,
 The most of it to us seems like
 A book with *seven seals*!
 Except that from that western land
 Where she a home had sought
 Back to the old ancestral roof
 A motherless babe was brought!
 One broken seal! How short that life
 And yet perhaps 'twas long
 In pages finely written o'er
 In pleasant scenes among.

Days short and sweet in life may be
 Most charming, happy, true—
 Hold more than long and trivial years
 With *nothings* running through!
 So let those chapters be unread
 And all the dreams unknown
 Of this one flower of the Spring
 Culled ere fully blown!

The Pearl of Great Price.

I thought of the fashion prevailing
 In descriptions of gowns—
 The festooning, frilling and trailing,
 And the twinkling with stones.
 But *our* gems are dew-drops on glumes
 Of this blossoming grass:
 While fruits and grains are gladdening
 homes
 --Enhancing loveliness.
 There's the rubicelle, amethyst, pearl
 In each lapidist's show—
 There is sapphire, emerald, beryl
 That scintillate and glow.
 But Time's too precious to be wasted
 here
 Too long on things like these:
 The world needs workers afar and near
 In its philanthropies—
 Calling into light from ways of sin,
 And helping weak mankind!
 The gem of value, that I would win
 Is perfect peace of mind.

The Sarah Levinia.

On the banks of the peaceful Delaware—
 —The beautiful Delaware bay,
 Sat once, a restful company, watching
 The shimmering of waves at play.
 The gentlest billows rolling and tossing
 In their ebb and flow all day.
 Sea gulls, silent, came down in the sun-
 shine
 With wings white and gray, spread-
 ing wide.
 And vessels moved onward to the ocean
 On breast of the moving tide,
 So airily and gallantly sailing
 As though touched with human pride.
 A few years before, a new-rigged vessel
 Came glancing and floating along,
 While upon its star-board, or frontal bar
 Plain and unmistakably strong
 Was printed clearly "The Sarah
 Levinia"
 Untold and unsung in song.

But it unfolds a touching history—
 A history enwreathed in charms
 For while the schooner was being
 builded,
 Its owner, through calm and storms,
 As he came overseeing the workmen
 Carried in his loving arms
 His beautiful and interesting baby—
 A delicate blue-eyed one,
 And as she came in amidst the builders,
 Screened from harsh breezes and the
 sun,
 They strove each for her merry en-
 dearments
 So tenderly begun.
 Now when the vessel had reached its
 finishings
 Then the workmen in one acclaim
 Declared the schooner which they had
 builded
 Should wear the baby's name,
 And in its launching were heard their
 voices
 This kind decree, proclaim.
 So "The Sarah Levinia" (that vessel)
 In commerce plowed its way,
 While the maiden grew on to woman-
 hood
 Holding—weilding her sway:
 And these lines on the shrine of affection
 As an offering I lay.

Virginia.

We will call this babe Virginia—
 This tiny blue-eyed one,
 A child without a record in
 Her journey just begun!
 We'll name her our Virginia—
Ours in memory sweet
 Of as lovely, loving a child
 As e'er in life we meet—
 —One whose pure attractive childhood
 So often we recall,
 Ready to dispense a kindness
 With kindly cheer for all:
 Would that there were more such
 children
 In all our homes astir.
 So this one we'll name Virginia
 In memory of her.
 Yes, of her whose eyes were love—
 A dower of ebony hue,
 Black as a raven's glossy wings!
This little one's are blue!
 Though we call this child Virginia
 Yet we cannot dower
 These eyes with the same magnetic
 And loving power.

We are watching with the parents
 In deep solicitude
 All the wonderful unfoldings
 Of a human bud!
 We believe in the expressions
 That mark the human brow,
 And in *tones* that may be copied
 With an influence now.
 These may return in premiums
 Of joyfulness complete—
 May come laden back to parents
 Refreshing—even sweet!
 O, blessed are the attributes
 Of filial kindness—true!
 These fill children's eyes with beauty
 Whether black or blue!

A Comet.

Stay friends; do not sleep so early
 This calm and starry night—
 Cast aside the spell of slumber
 And catch a wondrous sight!
 There's a stranger in the heavens
 With his luminous train
 Following a northward pathway
 Where constellations reign!
 There is Lyra in the zenith
 In unmeasured heights:
 And Pleiades in splendor now
 Hangs out her fretted lights;
 While our own wandering planets
 Revolving in the sky
 Are casting lines of beauty down
 For every watching eye.
 But here's a stranger—new-comer.
 A mystic thing outright,
 Sweeping the very firmament
 Upon the wings of night.
 He may travel on and onward
 A thousand years or more
 Ere he returns to Earth's blue skies—
 This wondrous visitor.
 What *brings him hither*—his mission?
 A marvelous surprise!
 Arresting oh, the attention
 Of our startled eyes!
 Astrologer! does he portend
 Some evil for the Earth?
 Does that stern stranger in the sky
 Approach with breath of wrath?
 Much is learned and much unknown
 Of things right here below;
 Wisdom Supreme will grant the Light
 For all we ought to know!

Sharon.

On Sharon's tan-walks we bade to each
 adieu
 (Our dear alumni in an eastern school)
 Planning to meet again in a year or two;
 Our aspirations and dreamings beautiful
 But the wheels of Time are changeable!
 Now here in the closing of the fourth
 decade
 Since parting then at dear old Sharon's
 door,
 With all our varied burdens measured
 —weighed
 Two of us meet for the first, once more—
 Forty years of interval—two score!
 We meet in the *west*—a surprise to us
 both,
 And wonderfully changed in counte-
 nance;
 Yet Margaret's dark eyes, hold as in
 youth
 A depth of power from inheritance,
 And magnetic in every glance.
 What'er these years have brought to
 us, or taken—
 Wrenched from our lives, or added to,
 Whatever surface friends have long
 forsaken
 Or which throughout have proven true,
 All are settled now, and in review—
 We find the jewels of most enduring
 worth,
 Of priceless value unto all,
 Are the deeds of kindness, of forbear-
 ance—truth
 A clearer faith in life that's spiritual,
 A help and strength that cannot fail.
 1893

A Bird in Winter.

'Twas a jay at noon that caught our
 view,
 Lazily afloat in air;
 Its life seemed linked with the misty
 blue;
 Our interests awoke, afresh, anew
 As we traced its pathway there.
 But what sent it thus abroad to-day—
 This lone bird of graceful wing?
 Was it to foreknow in its instinct way—
 To detect as the early robin may
 A sign of the far-off Spring?
 More likely to fathom sounds of storm
 By our dull ears unheard,
 A kind of signal service, or alarm
 That protects most wisely from threat-
 ened harm
 The little winter bird.

Years.

How short the years seem now, and on
and on,

In sure processions go—
Planting about our temples, one by one,
Threads as white as snow!

What though we tread more slowly now
this year—

Tread leisurely along?
The push of business life afar and near
Should hold the young and strong:

But we have won the right to see ahead,
Through long experience—
Gained a higher niche for each silver
thread

In paths where we advance;
And we have won the light to see just
where

The poor *neglectives* stand—
How they're blinded by the delusive
glare

In the Deceiver's hand!
But here and there in life—above the
throng

Are sure to climb the best of all!
And these years and years as they glide
along

Will place the coronal.

In Time of Drouth.

Where is the rain cloud
While nature is suffering with thirst?
Heavy with dust, the leaves;
The stunted buds refuse to burst—
The rain-dove vainly grieves!

Oh rain-cloud!
The maple lifts her little palms
Beseechingly on high:
No answer from the blue dome
comes—
No soothing sounds reply.

Rain, rain cloud,
The hot dry earth is cracked in seams
Like fevered parching lips:
And slower glide the shallow streams
From which the wild bird sips.

O, listen! Harken!!
There is a blissful, blissful sound
Splashing the window pane;
Give thanks faint heart, give thanks
profound
For, this the later rain!

On the Parable of the Sower.

The thought that's *cherished* will thrive
and grow

And blossom into deeds!
Let us watch the gardens which we sow
'That nothing vile be creeping through
Out choking precious seed!

Kept in off the Streets.

It was only a sand-box, broad and long,
Partly filled with clean white sand,
So clean that it need not soil or stain
The whitest little hand.

A father placed it where his two young
sons

Were allowed all day to roam;
Bringing thus a sort of sea-side beach
Anear their cozy home.

And like a bounding step on the Sea-
shore

A dream of the sea—the sea,
Was this delving—tumbling of children
Happy as childhood could be.

The passers, passing, must surely have
paused

As thoughtful people do,
To notice this innocent rollicking
sport

And unendingly new,
Whereby these children detained at
home

In a sensible beautiful way,
Were thus kept from the street's rough
training
In safe contented play.

A Ramble.

We see today through restful eyes—
Through glad and blessed vision,
Dissolving views across the skies
From zenith to horizon.

We see new prospects everywhere
Enrolled—enwreathed in splendor:
And we enjoy our leisure rare
'Mid woodland blossoms, tender.

A flower belated in the bud
Is wondrously expanding,
Leading to kindoms ever good
To human understanding.

We're free to-day from worries laid
 In hurried life's existence,
 And yet we hear the hum of trade
 Through all this pleasant distance.

Let's leave for once, all care behind
 As though its clamors cease;
 Enjoy to-day, an unburdened mind—
 A true and holy peace,

The Roadside Daisy.

It lives where much that's loved, would
 die,

By culture's hand unled;
 Though crushed by feet that pass it by,
 It lifts a bruised head!
 'Twill rise again—its life resume—
 Put forth its blossoms fair
 'Twill rise, and live, and bud and bloom
 Unknown to tender care.
 Can we not learn from Flora's gifts—
 Her bright neglected plants,
 To find the strength that yet uplifts
 Through all discouragements?

Chrysanthemum.

Awake with the sweet and breezy
 Spring

In her crowning and her blossoming:
 But this one poor plant's uninteresting!

And awake too, through summery hours
 But seemingly sleeping, with powers
 Dormant in the season of flowers.

Now Autumn is here; her caressing
Is frost over plant life pressing
 A new and wonderful dressing.

Sweetly scented petals, dewy and tender
 Have wilted—perished like twigs on
 the fender

But *chrysanthemum* is rising in *splendor*!

Then Spirit, oh soul in a living hunger
 Succumb to discouragements, frowns no
 longer;

The frail reed may bend, but its life is
 stronger.

Tread the paths quietly, where duty
 calleth;

Every cloud may pass, that now appal-
 leth;

Gather brightness where'er the sun-
 beam falleth.

Outlooks may seem hopeless in life-
 time's Spring,

But oft wonderful is the awakening
 Of sleeping powers, that bitter trials
 bring!

Charms of Winter in the Country.

Not the dreary coldness
 Not the driving blast,
 But the snowy mantle
 When the night storm's passed—
 The soft and snowy mantle, found
 With drooping twigs all wet,
 And all the heavy plumes around
 With myriad star-gems set.

Not the cheerless portal,
 Not the fireless hearth,
 But the blessed households
 Rich in hope and mirth!
 Snow Flake, hang up thy crystals—blaze
 Reflected beauty's shown
 In answer to the sun's first rays
 Sent from the golden throne!

Not the boisterous voices
 Not the ribald tongue,
 But the deep inquiries—
 Minds awake and young
 Asking concerning silences
 So rapt and deeply still—
 The *meaning* of the mysteries
 That seem all space to fill!
 Not the noise of cities
 Not the rush on streets
 But the daily interests
 The quiet country keeps;
 And may it keep in usefulness
 The life it cradles here,
 To grow, expand, to help—to bless
 All life within its sphere!

Tennyson And His Young Niece.

Agnes Grace Weld, niece of the English poet, gives in a small book an account of her uncle's religious belief in which these words occur: "God is with us now on this down as we are walking together." I said to him (writes the author of the booklet) that I thought such a near actual presence would be awful to most people. The uncle in his answer said: "I should be sorely afraid to live my life without God's presence: but to feel that he is by my side now just as you are, is the joy of my heart."

"I'd sorely fear to live my life" from
 God apart
 In passing through the scenes of Time!
 To know that God is near "is the joy
 of my heart."
 Tennyson's words are here, sublime.

For what could this existence without
a Savior be;

A maze of wretched solitude—
Oh like helpless boats adrift, on the
stormy sea,

With none to help—no Savior, God!

But joy, joy to feel an all-living Pres-
ence near

Directing in our doubt, *the way!*

And although our lot most humble may
appear,

It is grand—great, *as we obey!*

Thankfulness.

We were glad when the scent of our
orchard blossoming

Crept in at our open doors,
While we strolled around restfully,
noticing

The first faint glow of stars.

And glad we can see from our grounds,
the coloring

Of the sunset sky at night,
When the soft warm air is sweet—all
things hallowing

Our hearts in hushed delight.

And glad we enjoy so fully the surround-
ings,

Enlightened by nature's hand,
In the grace of promising crops abound-
ing

For minds that understand.

Thankful too that clouds of pain have
vanished

As chaff from winnowing cast;

And the weary sleepless watching
banished—

Replaced by unburdened rest.

Thankful for the care of a bountiful Giver
In whose love our lives flow on,

Approaching a likeness to the peaceful
river

Within a garden beyond.

Let the Baby Sleep.

Let the winsome sleeping baby rest
His little dimpled hands softly pressed

About his gently heaving breast,
Innocent as any rose unblown.

He needs deepest love that parents know
And the tenderest they can bestow

Since he will surely grow and grow
Through influences around him thrown!

Then ere he attains to man's estate
Remove glaring pitfalls, small and
great—

Remove them ere it be too late
Your child of promise to protect!

Remove the saloons that so entice
That lead the young to wrong—to vice!

Beside his cradle, take your choice
A good man, or one in bar-rooms
wrecked!

Sweet Pea Blossoms.

"I'll name my favorite flowers:
(We listened to a childish voice)
Pansies in loveliest colors
Are always my choice."

"Not mine (the voice of another)
Mine is the fresh bud of a rose."
Thus archly, sister and brother,
Each, a favorite chose.

Further on, a shaded border
Evolved sweet clambering peas,
Dispensing nectareous odor
Stirred by the wings of the bees.

Perfection, though terrestrial
Seemed in all the petals born,
Emblems of types celestial
In humble glory worn.

And here the etherial essence
With its elevating powers
Led the children to a presence
Of love for *all* the flowers.

Robin.

Listen! 'tis a robin's power
In this blessed morning hour.
Calling to her own!
Yet others than her tender brood
Are listening with heart subdued—
Others than her own—

Since human ear hath caught the sound
Floating on the air around—
Melody of love!

And we join in, and soul's uprise
Mingling reverent prayer with praise
To Infinite Love!

Interpret true, these tender songs
Where grace ineffable belongs,
And enjoyment—joy!
Only a little bird, yet hear—!
Gladness floats to the Eternal Ear—
Enraptured joy.

The nest may be on an apple limb
 But onward floats a warbler's hymn,
 And heed farmer, heed.
 Harm not the bird, nor mud-lined nest
 For she's our *friend*,* be this impressed,
 The farmer's friend indeed.

* By actual observation it is learned
 that a robin in rearing her young consumed
 in one week 1000 cut worms.

The Flicker.

(Golden-winged woodpecker.)

Written for the children learning about birds.

What sort of a carpenter is there
 Hammering, hammering away
 Just on the outside of our windows
 And just at the peep of day?

He's up in the eaves of the house:
 What sort of a hammer has he?
 Get up children, awaken, awaken—
 Quietly—Let's see.

Its the flicker; we've caught him;
He never has driven a nail!
 A funny little carpenter, surely,
 And that hammer's his bill.

Phoebe.

"Twitter, twitter" 'Tis five o'clock,
 Do you hear the waltzine?
 And the chorus grows much sweeter
 "Phoebe, peewee, peewee."

Aslant from the sun there creeps a gold-
 en beam:

And the fluttering of leaflets now is seen
 Where this vision of beauty is quivering in,

 "Phoebe, peewee, peewee."

That little dream of air that scarcely
 blew
 Has touched a bursting rose-bud washed
 in dew:

O loveliest morn! Is Time born anew?
 "Phoebe, peewee."

Thus purely and sweetly dawns this day,
 that stirs

The sleepy little birds, (my choristers)
 With a benediction unto her that hears,
 "Phoebe, peewee."

The Blue Jay.

Our great blue jay, with an easy swing
 Floats out from the cedar's covering;
 Through the orchard and about the yard
 There flies no brighter -more noticed
 bird:

Such a sweeping of blue as he flies--
 Such a tint of summery skies.

But his music! That is coarse we own—
 No tenderness in his garrulous tone
 Not one plain little warbler, we note
 Would change its voice for a blue jay's
 coat.

Its song is a bird's sweet dower,
 Like scent is the charm of a flower.

Instruction is here for us who would
 learn

These lessons of value to discern—
 To understand beyond first sight
 The revelations of a latent light,
 For beauty may not always grace
 The dearest and the sweetest face,

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